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ANNUAL REPORT

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

Fiscal Year 1982-83



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FOR THE BLIND

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The Honorable Richard W. Riley
Governor of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina

The South Carolina Commission for the Blind is in compliance with the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and all requirements imposed pursuant thereto to the end that no person shall, on the grounds of sex, race, age, color, national origin, or handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the provision of any care or service. Any client participant, potential client, or interested person who is of an opinion that benefits are provided on a discriminatory basis has the right to file a complaint with the State Agency or Federal Agency, or both.

Respectfully Submitted,
S.C. Commission for the Blind

Maxine E. Bowles
Maxine E. Bowles,
Commissioner

LEGAL BLINDNESS QUALIFICATIONS

1. Legal blindness shall be defined as a level of central visual acuity, 20/200 or less in the better eye with the best corrective lens available, or a disqualifying field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees and which is sufficient to incapacitate one for self-support, or an 80 percent loss of visual efficiency resulting from visual impairment in more than one function of the eye, including visual acuity for distance and near visual fields, ocular mobility, and other ocular functions and disturbances.
2. "Severe visual disability" is defined as any progressive pathological condition of the eye or eyes supported by an acceptable eye examination, which in the opinion of the examiner may or will result in legal blindness within 24 months.

September 1, 1983

The Honorable Richard W. Riley
Governor of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina

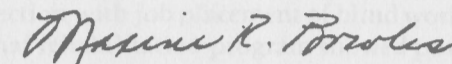
Dear Governor Riley:

We are proud to present to you our Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1982-1983. Within the following pages, you will find a concise summary of our accomplishments during the year, and learn of our projections for the new year.

The economy has been a constant unknown over the past few years in terms of providing health care services to the state's legally blind and visually impaired. We battled that unknown each day, yet we administered what we feel were the best of services to our clients. That philosophy will continue, even in the most trying times of budgets and money shortages.

We, the employees of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind, are dedicated to meeting the needs of our client population. Their requests are our purposes for existence, and these needs will always be first among our staff.

Respectfully Submitted,
S.C. Commission for the Blind



Maxine R. Bowles,
Commissioner

COMMISSION BOARD

1. Mr. Allan C. Mustard Columbia
(Chairman — 2nd Congressional District)
2. Clay W. Evatt, Jr., M.D. Charleston
(Vice-Chairman — 1st Congressional District)
3. Mrs. Earlene Gardner Aiken
(Secretary — 3rd Congressional District)
4. Mr. Robert R. Bell Laurens
(5th Congressional District)
5. Mrs. Mattie B. Gatlin North Charleston
(Member-at-Large)
6. Mrs. Patricia L. Patrick Darlington
(6th Congressional District)
7. Mr. Samuel L. Zimmerman Greenville
(4th Congressional District)

ADMINISTRATION

The ADMINISTRATION of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) faced many important issues during Fiscal Year 1982-1983 relating to the needs of and services for the legally blind.

Foremost among the concerns of the Administrative staff were legislative matters affecting the client population of the SCCB. Before the end of the fiscal year, three bills were passed by the legislature dealing with the rights of handicapped people, the legal school age for children who are blind or visually impaired, and a child restraint law for children in motor vehicles. The bill of rights law guaranteed the civil rights of handicapped persons to obtain employment, housing, full and equal use of public accommodations, public services and to make use of educational facilities without discrimination due to a handicap. Jurisdiction of a complaint of employment discrimination in violation of the act was vested with the State Human Affairs Commission. The legal school age for blind and severely visually disabled children was redefined to include pupils age four or older who were blind or possessed a severe visual disability. This enabled impaired children who would be four prior to November 1, 1983, to be eligible for services from local school districts. And, the legislature passed a bill that required all children ages four and under, beginning July 1, 1983, to be in an approved child restraint system when riding in the front seat of a motor vehicle. The bill further stated children one year and under must be in a child restraint seat in the back seat of a car, and children under the age of five must be secured by a seat belt when riding in the back seat of the vehicle. This law affected not only the children served by the SCCB, but also their parents and others who transported the children.

In other areas of interest, a study by the SCCB's Program Analyst revealed good news in connection with job placement of blind workers. A review of the vocational rehabilitation program showed positive trends in the weekly earnings, as well as an improvement in the kinds of jobs in which clients are placed. The study also indicated the SCCB's performance in this area was equal to or better than all the other agencies serving the blind in the Southeast. It was good news of this nature and good management practices by the Commissioner that resulted in a resounding vote of confidence for the Commissioner by the Governing Board.

A desire to improve services and to trim overhead expenses within government led to several meetings between the SCCB and officials

of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind. The two agencies are separate entities, yet work closely to provide the necessary vocational and academic services for the state's blind population. Discussions were held to focus on respective goals and objectives, and to determine mutual concerns between the two organizations.

Finances again were a major concern for the SCCB during Fiscal Year 1982-1983. The year was another period of tight budgets, cutbacks and projected revenue shortfalls. Two proposals, one for a three percent cutback and another for a five percent cutback, were submitted by the SCCB to the Budget and Control Board as requested.

Overhead expenses were minimized and purchases were curtailed during the year to funnel as much money as possible into services for clients. In an effort to streamline its operation, the SCCB closed two offices and relocated another. The Greenwood and Sumter offices were closed and absorbed by larger offices in Greenville and Florence. The Charleston office was moved to a smaller space to reduce expenses. At no point were client services interrupted or scaled back.

Fiscal Year 1982-1983 also marked the beginning of a new system for employee performance appraisals. Members of the SCCB Personnel Department worked with supervisors and staff to orient and train employees how to use and evaluate the new forms. The system was designed to offer a more accurate appraisal of an employee's performance.

The employees of the SCCB are members of a family, and all are dedicated to improving the lifestyle of the legally blind. One of the key factors in the success of the SCCB's programs is the experience and stability of the staff. The average length of agency service for each employee was 8.72 years. Seventy-three percent of the employees had over five years of service, and 39 percent had over 10 years to their credit. This was a significant factor in light of the realization the SCCB was created in 1967.

Employee training was also an asset to the staff and clients. During the year, 170 training opportunities were offered, and 98 percent of the staff participated in one or more programs. One successful university level course was "The Nature of Blindness in Rehabilitation." Twenty-four employees participated in this class.

Dedication on the part of the employees went beyond normal working hours, too. Many staff members volunteered time in a va-

riety of ways to assist the blind and visually impaired with their needs. Reports of these extra curricular activities were made to the Governing Board on occasion, and were received with pleasure by the seven member body.

The yearly staff conference was held in September to discuss topics suggested by the employees, and to hear presentations by experts in the field of services to the blind. It was a most informative meeting, and further strengthened the family bonds among the staff.

And, the Administration continued its fine rapport with the various consumer groups of blind people across the state. Presentations, demonstrations and appearances were made at county and statewide conventions of the groups in a mutual desire to improve the independence and quality of life for South Carolina's blind citizens.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Vocational Rehabilitation is a physical and mental process by which the blind and visually impaired are assisted in finding and maintaining employment. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors from the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) attempt to identify problems that prevent a blind person from obtaining employment, and, through an Individualized Written Rehabilitation Program (IWRP), attempt to secure gainful employment for the client. In achieving his or her goal of employment, the client has access to a variety of vocational rehabilitation services, including job development and job placement; medical treatment; psychological and vocational evaluation; adjustment to blindness training; vocational training, occupational tools and facilities; and, specialized counseling and guidance services.

Fiscal Year 1982-1983 for the VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION DEPARTMENT of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind was an improvement over the previous reporting period. The number of successfully closed cases rose to 243, as compared to 211 for the past twelve months.

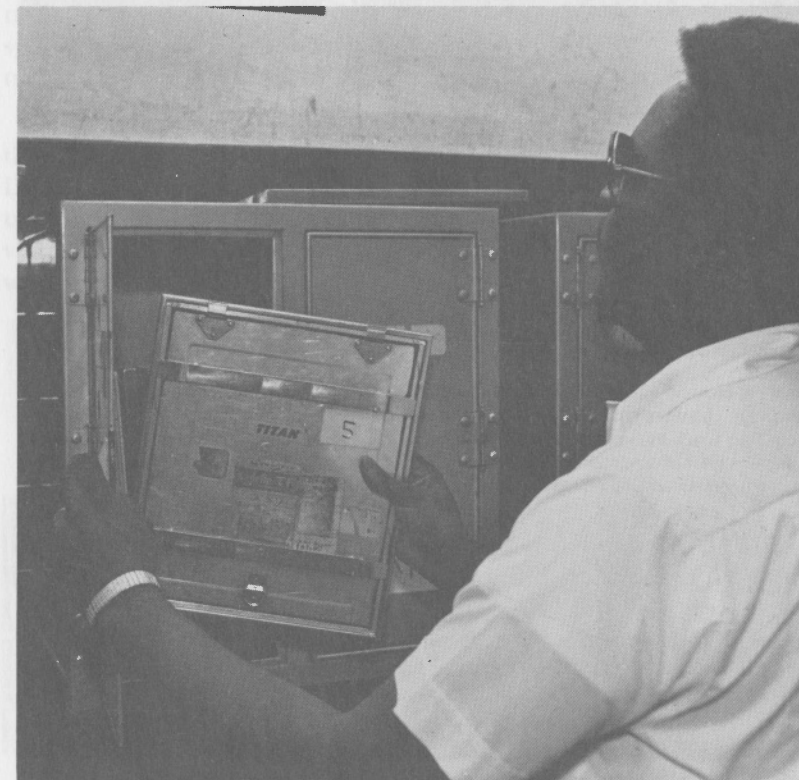
A sampling of statistical information for the year showed the overall cost for these cases amounted to \$699,168, with an average cost of \$2,877.24. The average age of the vocational rehabilitation client was 44. An average of \$3,208.38 was spent on male clients, with \$2,603.36 for female clients. Records show an average of \$2,893.25 was spent on white clients, while \$2,930.47 was disbursed for black clients. Other demographic information revealed there were 110 successful male closures and 133 successful female closures (white male-62, white female-70, black male-47, black female-61, other-3).

Outreach programs gained momentum as they continued to reach clients who, for one reason or another, could not attend the adjustment and orientation facilities in Columbia. These "traveling" programs offered daily living and mobility skills to over 200 legally blind clients in Orangeburg, Charleston, Yemassee, Greenwood, Florence, Aiken and Greenville. Many of the clients attending these 13 week programs came away better prepared for independent living. Others who may have needed additional assistance were referred to the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center for intensified instructions.

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors worked to improve their knowledge and skills in many ways. Two counselors received extensive training in seminars designed to facilitate the placement of

qualified legally blind workers. Another counselor and a vocational evaluator attained official certification as rehabilitation specialists.

Placement of blind clients was difficult during the year, primarily due to the slack economy nationwide. However, counselors were persistent and did place clients in jobs such as a computer programmer, a spinning doffer in a textile plant, a cardroom doffer in a textile mill, a produce packer, a food tabulator, a sewing machine operator, an animal caretaker, a cook, a manager trainee, a caseworker, a production assembler, a nurse's aid, a dishwasher, and a clerk. The prospects for more placements seemed to be improving at the end of the fiscal year as the nation's and state's economies seemed to be on the upswing.



Norman Hamilton, a totally blind employee at the Charleston Naval Hospital, works as a darkroom technician in the Radiology Department. Hamilton processes over 800 sheets of film each day. He was placed in the job by the SCCB's Vocational Rehabilitation Department.



David Houck, a legally blind doffer trainee at Wamsutta Mills near Anderson, South Carolina, changes spindles on a machine in the #1 plant. Special optical aids enable Houck to work as quickly and efficiently as a sighted doffer. Wamsutta Mills trained Houck as part of a project sponsored by the S.C. Commission for the Blind and Clemson University to place legally blind workers in the textile industry.

The SCCB also has a Disability Determination Unit to process claims in cases where blindness is the primary disabling factor. In Fiscal Year 1982-1983, the Unit screened and took action on 536 claims. Of this number, 33 percent were allowed disability benefits. As per normal, all claims were evaluated for rehabilitation potential and referred for possible services.

The ELLEN BEACH MACK REHABILITATION CENTER maintained a steady course during Fiscal Year 1982-1983. Enrollment in the Center exceeded 100 for the year, the first time since 1975.

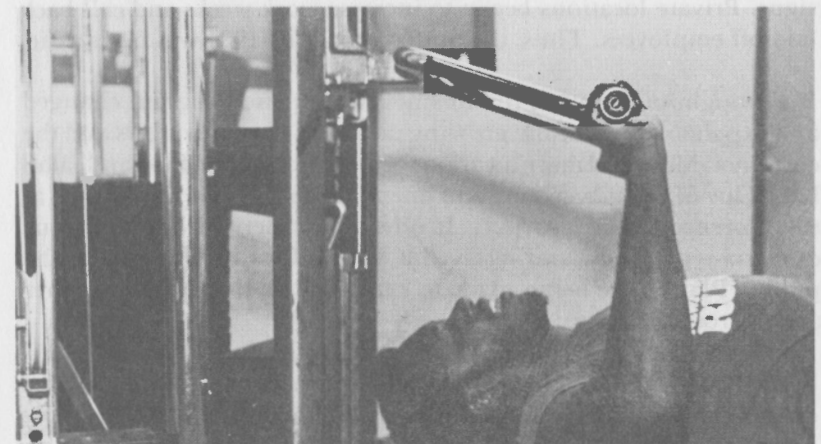
A program evaluation system continued to indicate positive advances in the Center's goals. An analysis of the progress indicated

55 percent of the Center's successful clients entered the program with no prior competitive experience, fewer clients had functional vision, and more clients were adventitiously blind. This translated to an improvement in referrals of appropriate clients.

The Center's success rate remained above goal levels. During the year, 35 percent were competitively placed, 40 percent continued on in a vocational or educational setting, and 24 percent became homemakers and other non-income producing workers.

Although money continued to be scarce, the Center did acquire some equipment that would benefit the program and its clients. In the vocational evaluation area, the Center purchased the C.U.B.E. (Conceptual Understanding of Blind Evaluation), a special evaluation tool for evaluating clients in not only worker traits, but additionally the client's level of conceptual ability, thought organization, spatial orientation and other developments associated with blindness and vocational readiness.

The Center's health and physical fitness program was enhanced by the acquisition, through a loan agreement with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, of an electrical treadmill. This device enabled the Center staff to improve the cardiovascular fitness of the clients, and increase their ability to return to work and lead a more active, rewarding life.



Each client enrolled in the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center is encouraged to participate in a daily exercise program, if physically possible. This daily routine increases stamina, improves the mind and helps to relieve stress sometimes associated with adjusting to blindness. Michael Nesmith (above) enjoys working on a bench press.

In other areas, the Center continued its Deaf/Blind Unit activities to facilitate the progress of deaf/blind clients. The unit sponsored workshops, and worked with other state agencies to meet the needs of their deaf/blind clients. And, the annual summer program for high school age blind students was held at the Center. The youngsters were involved, over an eight week period, with daily living skills, career planning and the job market. Extracurricular activities included a camping trip to the mountains and a trip to the Riverbanks Zoological Park.

The state's economy, and the nation's economy in general, did have an adverse effect on the overall operations of vending stands under the direction of the BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM of the SCCB. Several locations, especially those located in textile sites or in textile industry communities, were forced to close while others experienced indefinite layoffs, reduced work weeks, and excess inventories.

However, the Business Enterprise Program's vending facilities generated sales of \$3,320,205.08. In addition, the state, as well as the blind vendors, benefited monetarily from the program. During the Fiscal Year 1982-1983, \$124,686.87 was paid in state sales taxes by blind licensed vendors operating vending facilities across the state. The last quarter of Fiscal Year 1982-1983 began to show positive signs. Private locations began to increase work weeks and call back laid-off employees. Thus, the outlook for 1983-1984 was optimistic.

Throughout the year, the Business Enterprise Program changed and expanded to meet the growing demands of its managers and the customer. More and more locations began offering hot food and salad bars. One of the newer stands to open during the year was located at the Florence County Airport. It offered a variety of hot, delicious cafeteria-type foods, and received a tremendous response from the public. Plans were being made to capitalize on the success in other areas across the state.

BLINDCRAFT managed to weather the economic slump and recorded product sales and payments to workers equal to the previous year. Consignment sales of Blindcraft products for Fiscal Year 1982-1983 amounted to \$36,042.72. In addition, Blindcraft sold raw materials to working clients for a total of \$6,587.87. Horticulture plants sold through Blindcraft for the year added another \$5,550.28 to the yearly total.

Monies that were not used to pay for labor were transferred for raw material purchases. Most of the inventory was sold by the end of the year; however, new orders and contract sales will probably double the labor payments made to workers in the coming 12 months.

At the end of the state fiscal year, Blindcraft had negotiated contracts worth \$19,527 to supply products to the New York Lighthouse Industries for the Blind and the U.S. Army.

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

The PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS DEPARTMENT of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) began Fiscal Year 1982-1983 with encumbrances of \$48,500. This was the result of a funding shortage from the previous year to meet the needs of applicants for service. Numerous surgeries scheduled for the preceding year were rescheduled for the 1982-1983 year.

Escalating costs in providing medical care drastically reduced the units of service to clients. A comparison of Fiscal Years 1975-76 and 1982-83 shows how limited funding has affected services.

	1975-76	1982-83
Eye Examinations	3,028	693
Surgical Procedures	738	326
Visual Aids	1,338	425

In February, 1983, all routine services were discontinued, and emergency cases only were handled.

Medical services provided during the year, before the suspension occurred in February, included screening and detection of eye pathologies, eye examinations, and follow-up treatments as recommended by eye specialists. The programs were dedicated to the restoration of sight, at times requiring hospitalization and surgery, or to the purchase of glasses or other visual aids.

In 88 percent of the cases it served, the Prevention Department was the primary resource, and the secondary resource in 12 percent of its cases. Hospital costs amounted to \$252,927.20 during the year, excluding the costs for radiology, scanning and anesthesia. The total amount of fees paid to physicians amounted to \$73,428.80.

During Fiscal Year 1982-1983, the Prevention of Blindness Department sponsored 326 cases for surgery; 169 of these were for Cataracts, 19 for Glaucoma, 29 for emergencies, 17 for Strabismus and 91 for other conditions most of which were laser treatments for diabetic hemorrhaging.

Other statistics for the year indicate \$15,591.54 was spent to purchase 425 pairs of glasses and visual aids, at an average cost of \$36.69 for each unit. There were 1,639 follow-up examinations provided at a cost of \$8.00 per unit for a total of \$13,112. The Columbia Low Vision Clinic reported 73 persons had low vision examinations during the year.



Each Tuesday afternoon, the Prevention Department of the SCCB conducts a Low Vision Clinic at the Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center. This clinic enables people with very poor vision to benefit from a wide assortment of special optical aids that will raise their residual vision to a useable level. Eye specialists screen each case and recommend the proper eyewear.

A total of 8,442 persons were successfully screened by the Mobile Eye-Screening Van that is operated in conjunction with the South Carolina Lions Sight Conservation Association. Referrals for vision care were made to the Lions Club and to the SCCB.

SPECIAL SERVICES

The SPECIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) is a state funded program. It exists to provide services needed to improve the quality of life for blind individuals of all ages across the state. There are four divisions in the Special Services Department: Children's Services, Educational Radio for the Blind, Volunteer Services and the Media Center.

Records indicate the CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPARTMENT served 385 children, statewide, during the Fiscal Year 1982-1983. Several legislative and regulatory changes altered the population served by this department. As a result of one of these changes, the SCCB's five Children's Services Counselors now serve children from birth to an age a rehabilitational potential and vocational objective can be determined.

To aid children and their families in preparing for vocational planning, the Children's Services Department initiated, in February, 1983, a Career Awareness Workshop for children, ages ten through fourteen, and their parents. During the weekend workshop, parents participated in meetings and conferences on assisting and guiding their children in goal-setting and in achieving independence. Each child eagerly participated in activities using daily living skills, and routines requiring vocational planning. A featured highlight of the success workshop was a presentation on the setting of goals as made by a panel of employed blind persons.

In keeping with its obligations to meet the demands of children and parents, the Special Services Department again sponsored its popular workshop for parents of preschool age visually impaired children. The April workshop featured Ms. Sherry Moore, a preschool specialist with the American Printing House for the Blind.

Fiscal Year 1982-1983 included the establishment in Charleston of an Infant Stimulation Program for Visually Impaired Children. This special project began offering physical and mental stimulation to blind babies as part of a cooperative effort of the Children's Services Department of the SCCB and the Neonatal Follow-Up Services of the Medical University of South Carolina. A children's counselor works closely with the babies and families one day a week in the University hospital. This medical school/state agency partnership has as another of its goals the establishment of a parent/professional support network.



The Children's Services Department of the SCCB sponsors an Infant Stimulation Program in cooperation with the Medical University of South Carolina. This once-a-week program provides specialized attention from Richard King (above) to improve a blind child's physical stimulation and response skills.

In June of the fiscal year, the Children's Services Department succeeded in sponsoring a summer swim program for Columbia area blind children with the assistance of Columbia College. The classes were conducted by qualified instructors hired by the College for the summer to teach swimming techniques to area children. This cooperative effort afforded the blind children an opportunity to receive proper instructions while allowing the SCCB counselor time to handle other cases. The counselor did serve as a consultant to the swim program, yet did succeed in getting an already existing community program to incorporate blind children.

EDUCATIONAL RADIO FOR THE BLIND's staff of four, with the assistance of over 60 volunteers, continued to expand services to offer additional print materials to more blind South Carolinians. Programming hours were increased to 107 per week to feature Sunday newspapers.

A \$100,000 grant from the National Instructional Telecommunications Association through the South Carolina Educational Tele-

vision/Radio Commission enabled Educational Radio for the Blind to distribute more receivers, thus increasing listenership.

The exceptional programming of the Educational Radio for the Blind Network was recognized and featured at the Annual Association of Radio Reading Services National Convention in Phoenix. The Network's Program Manager was invited to discuss the innovative projects conducted in South Carolina.

Educational Radio for the Blind has received over the past years many letters of appreciation from listeners for the fine programming and service offered by the staff. Included below is an example of such letters:

1520 Senate Street
Apartment 2G
Columbia, S.C. 29201
January 3, 1983

South Carolina Educational Radio for
the Blind
1430 Confederate Avenue
Columbia, S.C.

Dear Staff and Volunteers,

This is just a note to thank you for your great service. I greatly enjoy listening to the newspapers being read as I get ready for work in the morning and when I come home at night. I also enjoy the readings from *Time* magazine and The Medicine Chest. I am a medical transcriptionist, so this program is of special interest to me. I also enjoyed the radio broadcast of the Rose Bowl parade this past Saturday. For the first time I was able to visualize what the floats must look like.

Thanks again for being there, even on holidays.

Sincerely,
Jean Sutton

THE VOLUNTEER SERVICES DEPARTMENT continued to serve as a vital statistic in the operation of the SCCB and its many programs. During Fiscal Year 1982-1983, 300 volunteers provided 7,946 hours of service to the SCCB. When multiplied times the hourly value of a volunteer in the United States, currently \$5.00, this amounted to savings of \$39,730 to the Agency.

Over 60 volunteers regularly read at least one hour per week for Educational Radio for the Blind. Other volunteers in the radio program assisted with handling listener requests and production assignments.

Volunteers were very important to the SCCB workshops for children and parents. They provided child care and support services throughout weekend programs. In addition, volunteers provided clerical support, assisted with braille textbook production, recorded books for college students and transcribed materials through the SCCB's braille computer.

A Volunteer Hall of Fame was founded during the year to honor individuals who provided four or more years of service to the SCCB. Fifteen volunteers were inducted into the initial Hall of Fame roster at the annual volunteer appreciation luncheon in April.

In Fiscal Year 1982-1983, the MEDIA CENTER continued its cooperative efforts with the State Department of Education to obtain braille textbooks for public school students.

Other Media Center services to the community included large print and braille program agenda, menus, state agency and community agency information brochures and applications, as well as taped materials for students and employed persons. A tally for the fiscal year showed 739 blind individuals received some form of materials in braille, large print or tape to assist them in full participation in employment, education and recreation.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

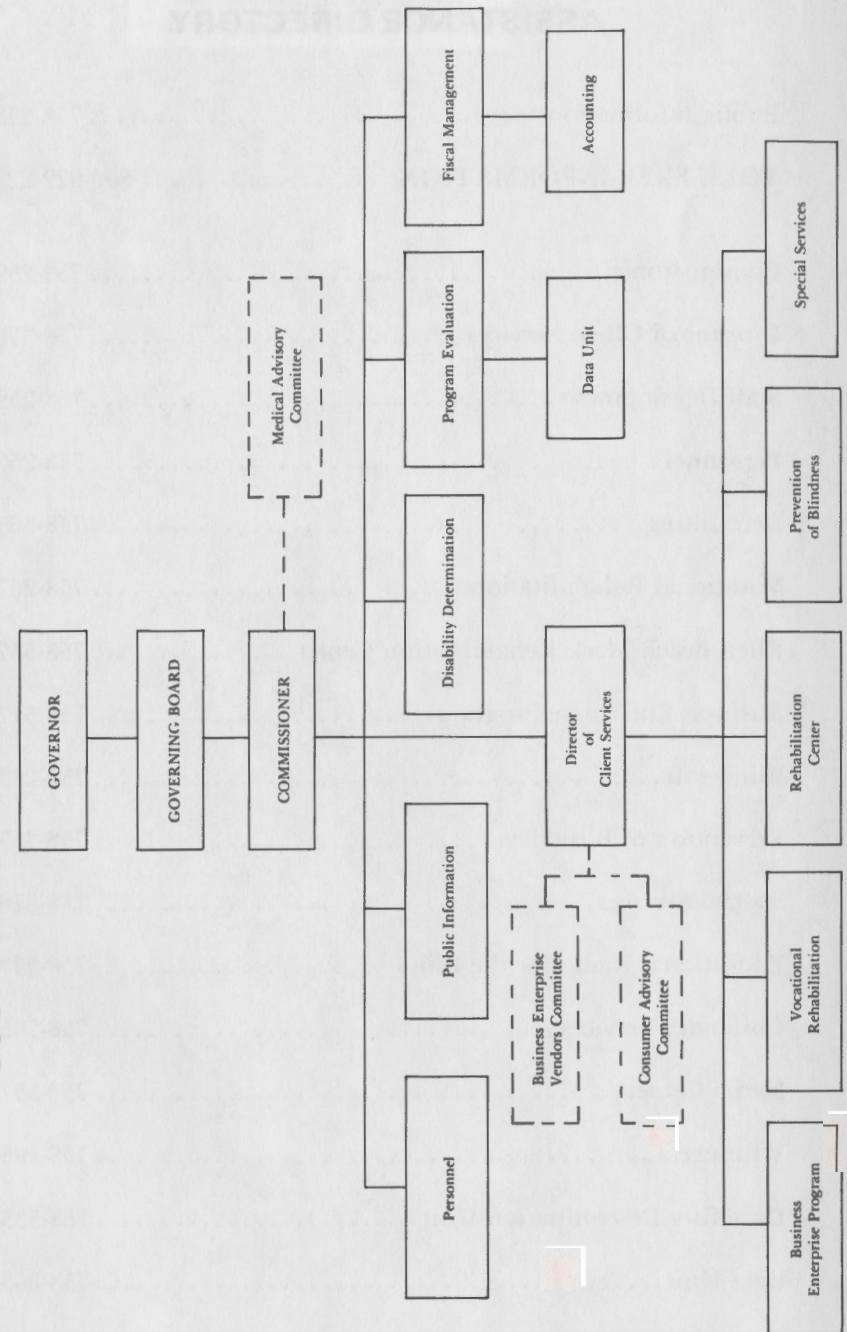
FISCAL YEAR 1982 - 1983

1. Federal Government	\$2,124,442
2. State Government	2,206,112
3. Revenue	<u>38,148</u>
Total — All Funds	\$4,368,702

EXPENDITURES

1. Administration	\$1,145,754
2. Prevention of Blindness	551,081
3. Rehabilitation Services	2,428,746
4. Special Services	<u>243,121</u>
Total Expenditures	\$4,368,702

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND



ASSISTANCE DIRECTORY

Public Information 758-2434

TOLL FREE INFORMATION 1-800-922-2222

Commissioner 758-2595

Director of Client Services 758-3761

Staff Development 758-2596

Personnel 758-2605

Accounting 758-8650

Vocational Rehabilitation 758-2671

Ellen Beach Mack Rehabilitation Center 758-5577

Business Enterprise Program 758-5173

Blindcraft 758-2233

Prevention of Blindness 758-3556

Special Services 758-8165

Educational Radio for the Blind 758-7771

Children's Services 758-7050

Media Center 758-5577

Volunteers 758-7050

Disability Determination Unit 758-5357

Data Unit 758-8652

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